AL.2.2009-119
c.2

This Is Your Life

a Career and Education Planning Guide

Alberta

Planning for Post-Secondary is Just a Click Away

Pursuing education or training after high school really is the key to the life you want. That's why Learning Clicks sends fun and enthusiastic college, university, and technical school students from all over the province to speak with your class about why they love being a post-secondary student.

These Learning Clicks Ambassadors know a lot about post-secondary education and training and they can help you find answers to your questions. They'll even give every student a free copy of the Learning Clicks CD-ROM!

When is a Learning Clicks Ambassador coming to your classroom? Ask your teacher to request a presentation at **learningclicks.ca** or by calling **780-415-9277.**

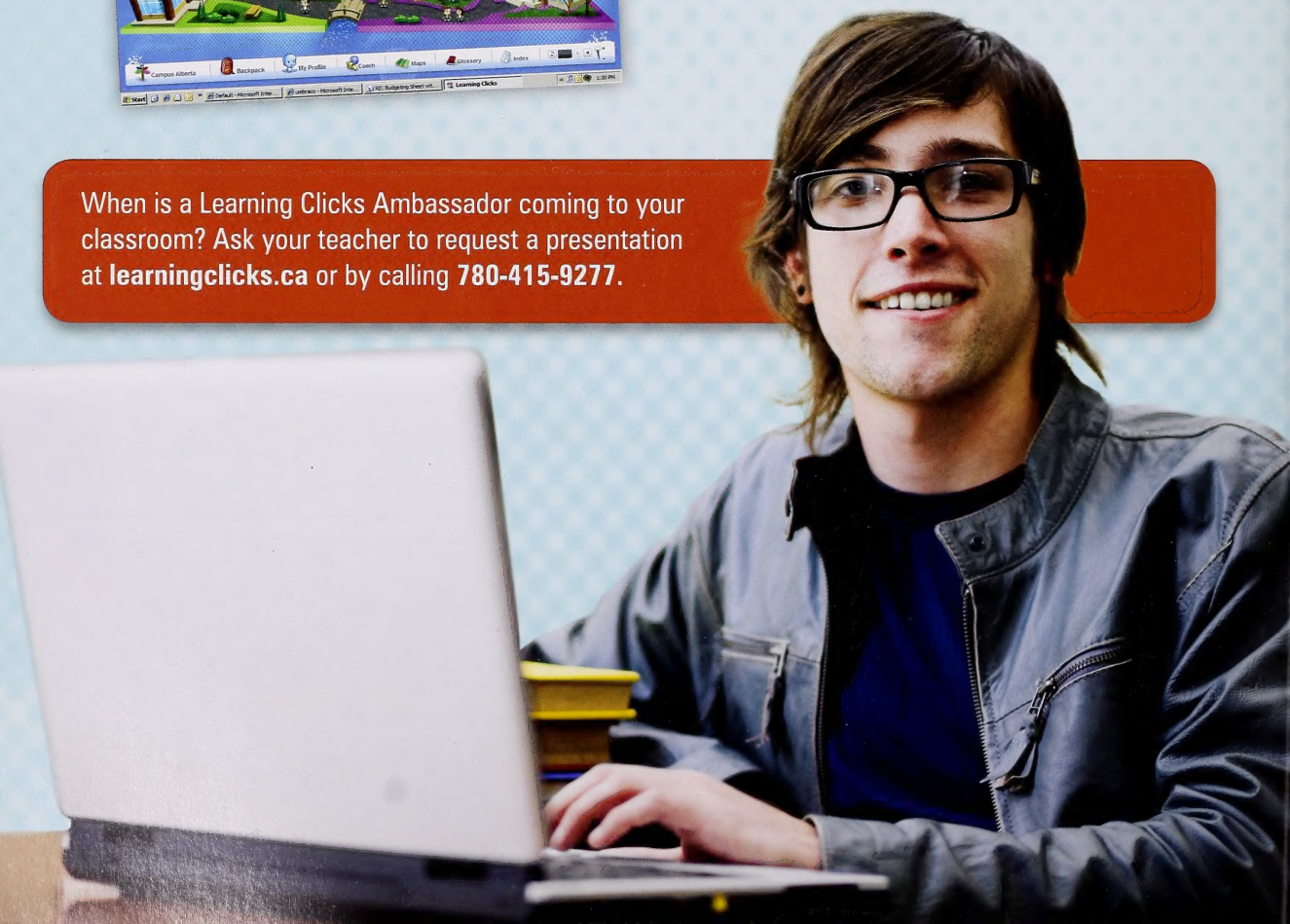


Table of Contents

Introduction

05 The Process
08 ALIS

Step 1: Getting to Know Yourself

09 Self-Assessment
10 Ask ALIS
10 Holland Code Quiz
10 What's Your Personality Quiz (Myers-Briggs Personality Type)
11 Career Navigator Quizzes
12 My Self-Assessment Results Chart
13 Imagine Your Ideal Future

Step 2: Exploring Possibilities

15 Thinking About Needs and Wants
16 OCCinfo—Occupation Information
19 Choose Your Top Three Occupations
19 Explore Your Top Three Occupations
21 My Top Three Occupations Chart

Step 3: Choosing a Direction

24 Why Get a Post-Secondary Education?
25 What Types of Post-Secondary Schools Are Out There?
25 What Type of Programs Can I Take?
26 What If I Don't Feel Ready?
26 EDinfo—Education Information
27 My Three Programs Chart

Step 4: Making It Happen

29 Identify Your Goal
29 Making Plans to Achieve Your Goals
31 Finding free money for your education
31 Applying for government student funding
31 Putting Your Plans Into Action
33 Making It Happen Web

This publication is available to view online at **alis.alberta.ca/publications**

Additional copies can be ordered from the Learning Resources Centre: **www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca**

Phone: 780-427-5775
Fax: 780-722-9750

ISBN 978-0-7785-8133-8

For copyright information, contact:
Advanced Education and Technology
Campus Alberta Awareness
Phone: 780-427-5603
Fax: 780-644-8427
Email: caap@gov.ab.ca

© 2009 Government of Alberta, Advanced Education & Technology

This material may be used, reproduced, stored or transmitted for non- commercial purposes. However, Crown copyright is to be acknowledged. It is not to be used, reproduced, stored or transmitted for commercial purposes without written permission from the Government of Alberta, Advanced Education & Technology. This publication is not for resale unless licensed with Government of Alberta, Advanced Education &Technology.

Every reasonable effort has been made to identify the owners of copyright material reproduced in this publication and to comply with Canadian copyright law. The publisher would welcome any information regarding errors or omissions.

Government of Alberta, Advanced Education & Technology publications may contain or reference publications, trademark, patent or copyright held by third parties ("third party material"), identified with a credit to the source. This does not grant the user a license or right to that third party material. Users who wish to reproduce any third party material in this publication should seek permission from that third party.

This information was accurate, to the best of our knowledge, at the time of printing. Occupation information and educational programs are subject to change, and you are encouraged to confirm with the resources the information often and seek additional sources of information when making career and education decisions.

"It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are."
E.E. CUMMINGS

Introduction

Welcome to Life After High School!

If you've ever wondered...

- what am I going to do after high school?
- how do I decide what I want to do?
- what kind of training or education should I take after high school?
- what if I start a program and then change my mind part way through?
- how do I figure out what to do next?

...then keep reading this guide!

NOTE!

More unique information will be generated this year than in the previous 5000 years.

The World Today

You are part of the best-educated and most technically-minded generation in history—the first to grow up in a world of computers, video games, cell phones, iPods and instant access to information via the Internet.

What does this mean for you? There is no limit to the options available and post-secondary education is the best way for you to prepare for your future!

Many of today's college majors didn't exist 10 years ago, such as new media, organic agriculture, e-business, nanotechnology and homeland security. "We are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist... using technologies that haven't been invented... in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet." —DID YOU KNOW 3.0

Go to **YouTube.com** and type **Did You Know** in the search function. Watch the latest version of this video.

So far, your parents and people in your school system have probably made many major decisions for you. Now it's your turn to take control of your life and choose your own path for life after high school. Where you go from here is up to you.

FOUR IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW:

1. Thinking about life after high school is scary, overwhelming and confusing for many people.
2. You probably won't decide today what you're going to do for the rest of your life.
3. Uncertainty is normal and change is inevitable.
4. You'll feel better when you just start exploring.

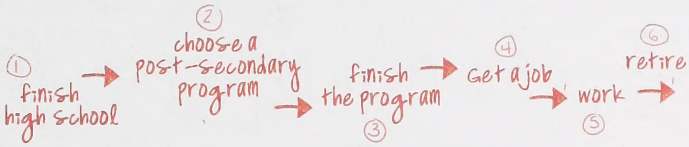
You can use this guide to help you get started.

"People say that you're going the wrong way when it's simply a way of your own."
ANGELINA JOLIE

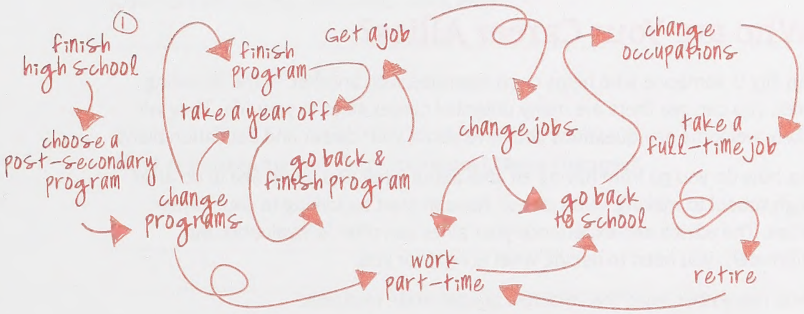
The Process

Career and Education Planning

Many people mistakenly think that career planning is a one-time thing you do as you're finishing high school. They think a career path should look like this:

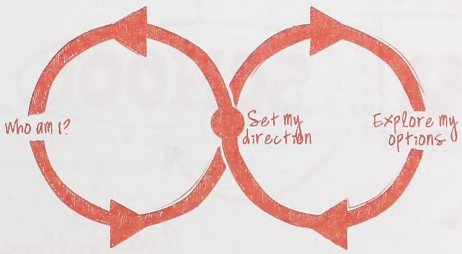


But most career paths don't follow a straight line. They look more like this:



A career plan isn't **one big decision** that you have to live with for the rest of your life. In a world where things are constantly changing, your career path will change too.

Career planning is an ongoing process. You identify a direction—an occupation or a program that reflects what you're good at and what inspires you—then you get the education and experience you need to move in that direction. You'll continually evaluate what you want and need, making changes to your career path as changes happen in your life.



FOUR STEPS
to Career and Education Planning

There are four steps to career and education planning and they will be repeated many times throughout your life:

1. Get to know yourself.
2. Explore possibilities.
3. Choose a direction.
4. Make it happen.

DID YOU KNOW?

If career planning feels overwhelming right now, maybe it's because the process is new to you and you aren't sure what to expect or what to do. It is a big deal but it's not rocket science (unless rocket science is the occupation you choose). Millions of teenagers and young adults go through these steps and find great career paths and so can you.

It takes work and there's a lot to think about so it makes sense to get some help.

- Talk to your **career allies** about your plans.
- Ask them for assistance to help you find and explore your interests, learn skills and determine your values.
- Ask them questions about their education experiences and occupation choices.
- Use this guide-it will help you move through each step of the process.

Who are Your Career Allies?

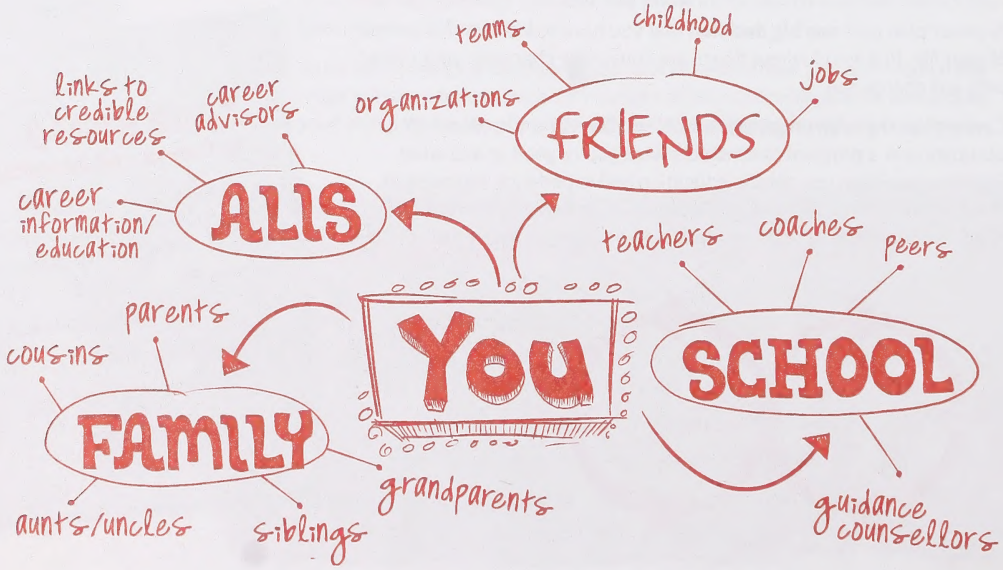
"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out."

DECCA RECORDING CO. REJECTING THE BEATLES, 1962

An ally is someone who helps or co-operates with another. In the following web, you can see there are many potential career allies in your life. They will likely welcome any questions you have about your career and education plans.

So, how do you go from having an idea about what you might like to do after high school to making some plans? You can start by talking to your career allies. The advice and experience your allies can offer is invaluable. But, ultimately, you need to decide what is right for you.

And remember, even the smartest people make mistakes.



"Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that."

HAROLD WHITMAN

Explore More...

To get through the career and education planning process, ask yourself these questions:

What do I see myself doing after high school?

.....

.....

.....

What decisions might I need to make to get started on further education or a career path?

.....

.....

.....

What changes might I need to make?
(courses I am taking, volunteer work, etc.)

.....

.....

.....

What resources are out there to support these changes?

.....

.....

.....

How can technology support my imagined future?
(taking course through distance education or e-learning)

.....

.....

.....

What resources will I need to create my ideal future?
(allies, finances, information and school supports)

.....

.....

.....

You do not need to know the answers to these questions right now. They are simply guiding questions to keep in mind as you go through the process of career and education planning.

"Doing your best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment."

OPRAH WINFREY

ALIS
Alberta Learning Information Service

DID YOU KNOW?

You'll be visiting the ALIS website **(alis.alberta.ca)** often as you go through this guide. Bookmark it now for future reference.

The **Alberta Learning Information Service** (ALIS) web site offers information, tools and resources to help you with every step in the career planning process. You can "ask" ALIS (pronounced Alice) about

- career planning
- occupations
- education after high school (post-secondary)
- paying for post-secondary education
- employment options and work search

Get to Know ALIS

Visit the ALIS website at **alis.alberta.ca** where you can do the following:

Explore Learning Clicks

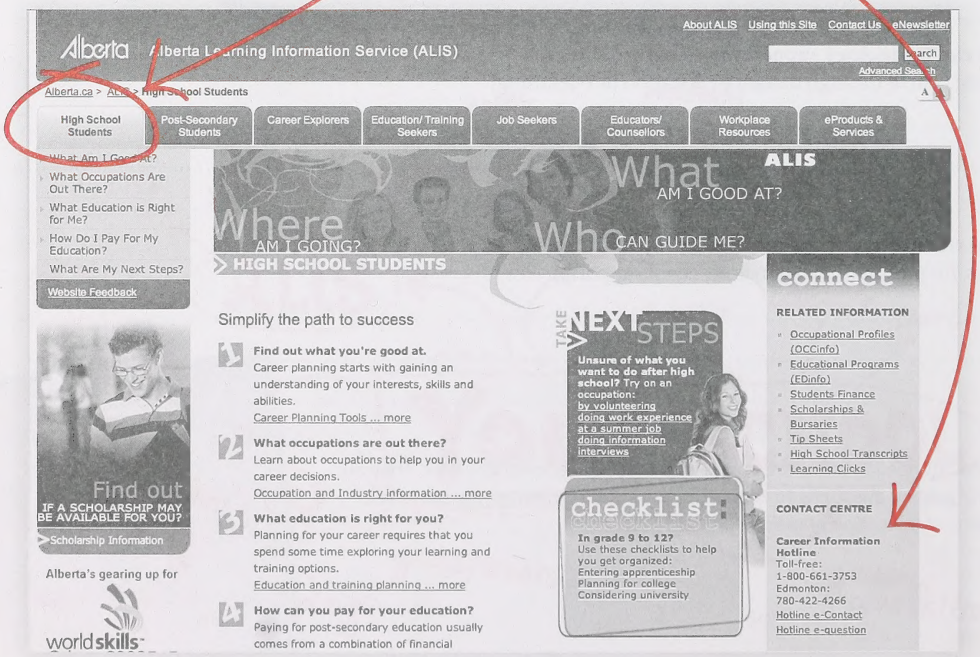
1. What are Learning Clicks presentations about? **learningclicks.ca**
2. ASK your teacher when a Learning Clicks Ambassador is coming to your classroom.

Explore the High School Students tab on the ALIS website at alis.alberta.ca/high-school

1. CHOOSE a topic in the left navigation column.
2. CLICK on a checklist.
3. VIEW the next steps.

Contact the Career Information Hotline by e-mailing or calling.
A Career Advisor will provide answers to your career, learning and employment related questions.

Right menu, middle section of high school tab.



"I don't want to be the next Michael Jordan. I only want to be Kobe Bryant."

KOBE BRYANT

Step One
Getting to Know Yourself

You need to know yourself—who you are, what you value and what you want—in order to make good decisions about what to do after high school. After completing the activities in this step, you'll have a clearer picture of your interests, values, attitudes, personality and skills. This self-knowledge will help you make better choices on your career path.

In **Getting To Know Yourself,** you're looking for answers to these questions:

- What's important to me?
- What inspires me?
- What am I good at?
- What do I like to do?
- What do I really want to do in my life?

Self-Assessment

Knowing yourself is very important in finding a post-secondary program or job you enjoy. By assessing yourself—identifying what's important to you—you discover who you are and what you want out of life, and equally important, what you don't want.

Self-assessment involves learning about

- who you are
- what you do best
- the places (environments) and people that give you energy
- the things that motivate you

DID YOU KNOW?

Chances are you'll choose a career path for reasons that are as unique as you are:

- You could turn your **interest** in music into a career in the recording industry.
- The **people** who cared for you in hospital could inspire you to go into the health care field.
- A great travel **experience** could lead you towards the recreation and tourism industries.

Protect your privacy online

READ THIS FIRST!

Some of the websites to which ALIS links require you to register or create a profile in order to use their quizzes and tools. You may be asked to provide personal information: your name, email address, level of education and gender. This information lets you

- personalize evaluations and results
- save results and access them later
- retrieve your password

On the downside, your personal information on some websites

- exposes you to email marketing and spam
- increases the risk of identity theft

Never include the following information in a general online registration:

- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- driver's licence
- bank or credit card information
- birth date
- street address

Ask ALIS

ALIS has a great section on self-assessment that will help you get to know yourself. The online quizzes can help you determine your personality traits, skills, work values and interests. Enjoy doing these quick, easy and fun-to-do quizzes.

1 GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/high-school**.
2 Under the left navigation menu, CLICK on **What am I Good At?**
3 CLICK on **Self-Assessment Tools.**

NOTE!

The occupations you find here are limited to the programs offered by the college hosting the quiz website. For more information and occupation ideas about each personality type, do a search on Google. Type **WIKIPEDIA HOLLAND CODE.**

The Holland Code Quiz

This quiz takes about 10 minutes

Start with this quiz to evaluate your skills, interests and personality traits. The results will suggest occupations most likely to suit you.

1 GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/aboutme**.
2 Under **Interests,** CLICK on **Holland Code Quiz.**
3 Do the quiz and CLICK **Submit Answers.**
4 A pop-up window will open with your results; record your three-letter code in the space below.
5 CLICK on your code in the pop-up window to open a page of occupations that match your skills, interests and personality traits.
6 Use the spaces below to WRITE DOWN a few of the occupations that might interest you.

HOLLAND CODE: ☐ ☐ ☐

OCCUPATIONS: .....

.....

.....

What's Your Personality Quiz

Myers- Briggs Personality Type

This quiz takes about 6 minutes

Take this quiz to assess how you see the world and make decisions.

1 GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/aboutme**.
2 Under **Personality Types,** CLICK on **What's Your Personality Type?**
3 READ the instructions and answer the four questions.
4 CLICK on **Discover Your Type.**
5 The results will give you four personality traits and some occupations that suit people with those traits.
6 RECORD your four-letter code and some related occupations in the spaces provided.

MYERS-BRIGGS CODE: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

OCCUPATIONS: .....

.....

.....

LEARNING CLICKS CD-ROM

You can also use your Learning Clicks CD-ROM to take the Myers-Briggs Personality Quiz and get some great results.

Create an Online Alias

You can protect your privacy online by creating an alias for yourself—a totally fictional "you" with personal information that you make up. Use **hotmail.com** or **yahoo.ca** to set up an email account for your alias using "fake" information. Keep track of your fictional information here:

My Online Alias

NAME: ..... EMAIL: .....

BIRTH DATE: ..... PROVINCE: ..... POSTAL CODE: .....

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: ..... PASSWORD: .....

OTHER: .....

How to Create a Secure Password

1. THINK OF A SENTENCE THAT IS EASY FOR YOU TO REMEMBER, but difficult for others to guess. Take the first letter of each word of the sentence that you've created to create a new, nonsensical word. **Example: My online alias is Joe Canadian from Smoky Lake = moaijcfsl**
2. MAKE IT COMPLEX. The greater variety of characters that you have in your password, the harder it is to guess - mix uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. **Example: MOaiJCf$L**
3. MAKE IT LENGTHY. Add extra characters to increase the protection your password provides - passwords should be 8 or more characters in length; 14 characters or longer is ideal. **Example: ?MOai***JCf$L>**
4. TEST YOUR NEW PASSWORD with Password Check at **microsoft.com/protect/yourself/password/checker.mspx**.

Career Navigator Quizzes

When you do all four Career Navigator quizzes, you will get a more complete self-assessment.

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/aboutme**.
2. Under **Interests,** CLICK on **Career Navigator and Quizzes.**
3. LOG IN using your online alias.
4. TAKE the following four quizzes:
   - The Abilities Quiz
   - Data, People and Things Quiz
   - Work Preference Quiz
   - Work Values Quiz
5. The combined results of these quizzes will give you a list of skills, interests, values, personality traits and related occupations that will be saved to your online alias account.
6. Record your results on the **My Self-Assessment Results Chart** on page 12.

These take about 5 minutes each

NOTE!

Check out Alberta Work Search Online for more information about your online profile and privacy at **alis.alberta.ca/worksearch**.

WHAT RESULTS ARE YOU GETTING?

Do occupations such as funeral director or dolphin trainer come up? Focus on the patterns that emerge from your results, such as:

- occupations that are repeated
- occupations that are in the same field (for example, health care, education or fields)
- occupations that use similar skills and abilities (for example, communicating with others, organizing, problem solving, or writing). Do you recognize these as some of your strengths?

Check if your school subscribes to Career Cruising or Bridges. These online programs offer quizzes about your interests, skills and other areas to help you get to know yourself.

My Self-Assessment Results Chart

Show your results to your career allies and ask what patterns they see!

My Personality Traits:

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

5 .....

My Skills—The Things I Do Well:

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

5 .....

My Values—The Things That Are Important To Me:

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

5 .....

My Interests:

1 ..... 6 .....

2 ..... 7 .....

3 ..... 8 .....

4 ..... 9 .....

5 ..... 10 .....

Occupation Ideas:

1 ..... 6 .....

2 ..... 7 .....

3 ..... 8 .....

4 ..... 9 .....

5 ..... 10 .....

If dreaming, then dream BIG!

Imagine Your IDEAL Future

You're the ultimate expert on YOU. Picture your ideal future work life clearly in your mind. Then answer the following questions:

What type of work am I doing?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Where am I working and living?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Who are the important people in my life (work and home life)?

.....

.....

.....

What skills am I using at work (outside of work)?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What do I like about my work and my home life?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What am I most proud of?

.....

.....

.....

What am I looking forward to?

.....

.....

.....

"We're constantly being told who other people think we are, and that's why it's so important to know yourself." SARAH MCLACHLAN

LEARNING CLICKS AMBASSADORS

Sometimes it helps to hear how others have connected their personality traits, skills, values and interests to a career path. Learning Clicks Ambassadors are post-secondary students who are moving on their career paths-have them share their story with you!

Ask a teacher to book a Learning Clicks presentation for your class or school at **learningclicks.ca/request.**

DID YOU KNOW?

None of the tools on ALIS can fully capture the unique complex person you are. Check what you have learned through the tools with your allies and your own gut feelings or intuition.

You've developed a list of skills, interests, values and personality traits and a vision of what your ideal future could look like. The tools and resources you've learned about in this section are there for you whenever you need to review. With this self-knowledge, you can continue exploring your occupational options.

Explore More...

- Have some fun! Choose your favourite colours and find out what careers are best for you. Visit **careerpath.com**. Click on **Career Tests,** then on **Color Career Counselor.**
- Want to do more quizzes? Check out the other self-assessment tools at **alis.alberta.ca/aboutme**.
- Want more information on the Myers-Briggs? Google it and go!
- Create your own personal Word Cloud like the one below, using your personality traits or occupation possibilities. Visit **wordle.net**.

"I'm doing it because I choose it. And if it's not working, I can make a change." ALANIS MORISSETTE

Step Two
Exploring Possibilities

There are thousands of occupations! How do you know which ones might be right for you? You go exploring.

In Exploring Possibilities, you're browsing. You don't have to make a commitment to the occupations you're checking out unless you want to. As you go through the activities in Step 2, you'll identify many possible occupations. You will choose three to explore in-depth.

DID YOU KNOW?

An occupation is a group of jobs with similar characteristics. Nursing is an occupation. There are many types of nursing and nursing-related jobs, all with similar traits.

A job is a specific position with an employer. If your occupation is nursing, your job might be working as a **registered nurse in the pediatric department at Victory Hospital.**

A career is the sum total of your life experiences including education, training and work, paid and unpaid (volunteer). In other words, it's your resumé.

Congratulations. If you can put together a resumé, you've already started your career!

Think About Your Needs and Wants

To start, think about your needs and wants and how they can affect your choice of occupation. Which factors on the following list are the most important to you? Check your **top five** in the boxes below.

It's important that an occupation I choose

- ❍ matches my values and interests
- ❍ uses my skills and strengths
- ❍ includes lifestyle factors, such as travel, working from home, flexible hours, security and ability to live where I would like to
- ❍ encourages personal growth and contribution to community
- ❍ requires further education that I can complete (level, time it takes, costs)
- ❍ offers opportunities to advance
- ❍ includes adequate financial rewards
- ❍ is something my family expects me to do
- ❍ accommodates my culture or religion
- ❍ means I am okay with having to give up something to pursue it
- ❍ other:

.....

.....

OCCinfo—Occupation Information

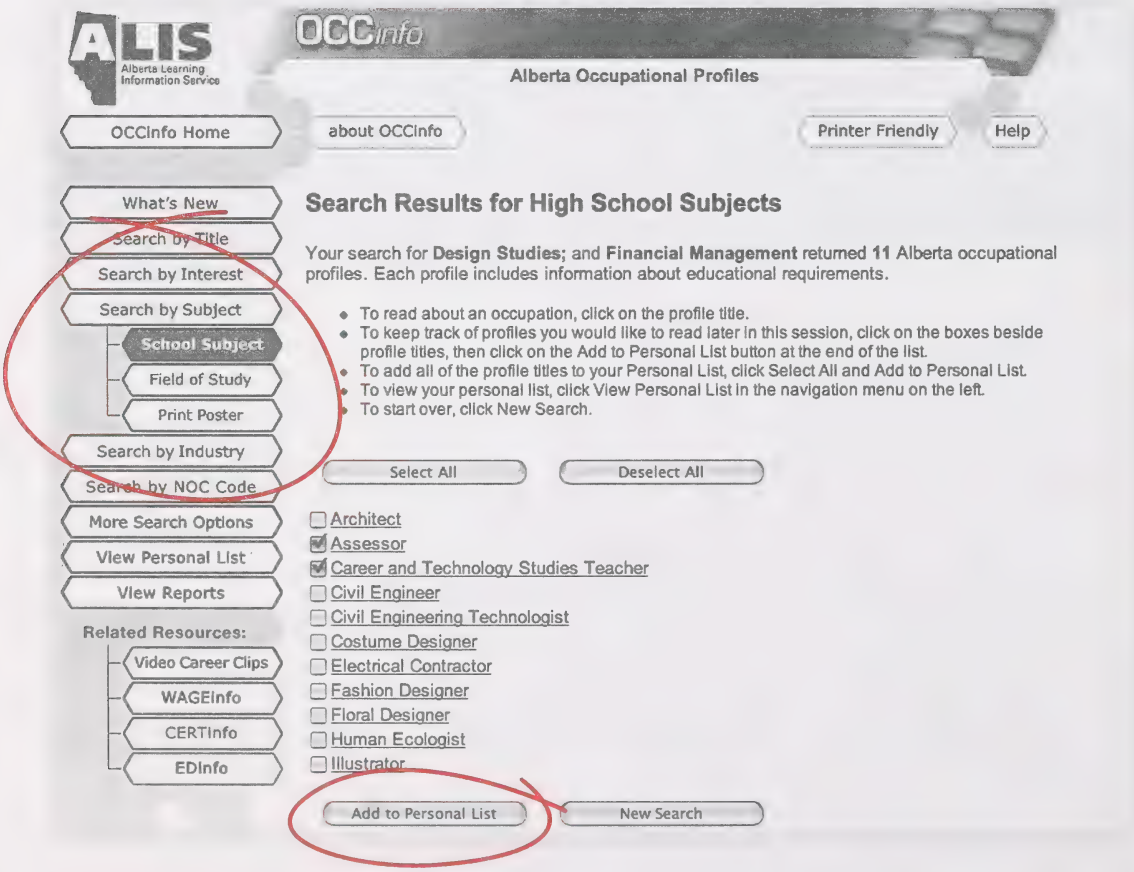
Next you're going to generate more occupational options. You already started to do this in Step 1 where you discovered some possible occupations that match your preferences. Find more by using OCCinfo at **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**.

OCCinfo has more than 500 occupational profiles on various occupations within Alberta. Each profile has detailed information that explains the following:

- **Duties** What work might I actually be doing in a particular occupation?
- **Working conditions** Would I be working inside or outside; at a desk or standing up? Are there long working hours? Would I be working with dangerous materials?
- **Personal characteristics** What type of people enjoy this type of work?
- **Educational requirements** What type of education or training do I need to do this work? How long will it take to complete training? Where can I take the necessary educational programs?
- **Employment and salary** Where could I work? What organization or company hires people in these occupations? How much money would I be paid?
- **Related occupations** What else could I do that's similar?

NOTE!

Once you leave the OCCinfo site, any information you have saved to the Personal List will be deleted.



Searching OCCinfo

There are several ways to search occupations on OCCinfo. For example, you can search by interest, by subject or by field of study. Play around with the different options.

Try at least two of the search methods. Save the occupations you are interested in to your "Personal List" in OCCinfo online. Before you leave the OCCinfo site, print your list, copy and paste to a Word document or write down the information.

Search by Interest

If you don't know what occupations you're interested in, start here.

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**.
2. CLICK on **Search by Interest** in the left navigation menu.
3. CHOOSE AND RANK the three statements that best describe you. RECORD them here:

   .....

   .....

   .....

4. CLICK **Go,** and check out the suggested occupations. Save any that interest you in your Personal List.

TIP:
Need help deciding how to rank the statements? Go back and check out your results from the Work Preferences Quiz under Career Navigator in Step 1, pages 11 and 12.

DID YOU KNOW?

Here's what the letters at OCCinfo Search by Interest mean:

D = **Directive:** taking charge, taking responsibility, making decisions
I = **Innovative:** exploring, experimenting, initiating, creating
M = **Methodical:** organizing, focusing, working with policies and procedures
O = **Objective:** working with tools, equipment, instruments and machinery
S = **Social:** working with, caring for, assisting people

Search by Subject

Want to find out what jobs are related to your favourite school subjects? Try this.

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**.
2. CLICK on **Search by Subject.**
3. CLICK on **School Subject.**
4. SELECT at least two subjects and RECORD your choices here:

   ....

   ....

5. CLICK **Go,** and check out the suggested occupations. Save any that interest you in your Personal List.

TIP:
The more subjects you choose, the fewer results you'll get. Try choosing different groupings of subjects for more career ideas.

TIP:
Stay open to possibilities. 70% of high school and university students report that at least one chance event influenced their educational and career choices.

Search by Field of Study

Wondering what occupations are related to a specific post-secondary program? Explore this further

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**.
2. CLICK on **Search by Subject** in the left navigation menu.
3. CLICK on **Field of Study.**
4. SELECT a field from the list and CLICK **Go.**
5. RECORD the field you chose here:

   .....

6. SAVE a few occupations to your Personal List.

Narrow Your Occupation Options

Click on the **View Personal List** button to bring up the possible occupations you've gathered.

Keeping in mind what you learned about yourself in Step 1, page 12, narrow your list to ten potential occupations and record them below.

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

5 .....

6 .....

7 .....

8 .....

9 .....

10 .....

Consider how each occupation fits with your interests, skills, values, personality traits AND how well each reflects your top five needs and wants (page 15).

TIP:
If an occupation looks interesting but is not quite right for you, check out **Related Occupations** in the OCCinfo profile.

DID YOU KNOW?

The **Learning Clicks** CD-ROM organizes occupations by career pathways. You can enter your Myers-Briggs personality type from Step 1 and it will highlight the occupations within each pathway that are most relevant for you!

Choose Your Top Three Occupations

Out of all the potential occupations you generated, choose your top three.

- Review the potential occupations you recorded in Step 1 on page 12 and Step 2 on page 18.
- Look for patterns.
  - Do similar occupations turn up on both the lists?
  - Are many of the occupations in the same field?
  - Do many of them use the same skills?
- Think about what you know about yourself. Which of these occupations can you see yourself succeeding at and enjoying?

Identify your top **three occupations.** Record them in the **My Top Three Occupations Chart** on page 21.

Explore Your Top Three Occupations

Now that you have narrowed your choices to three occupations, continue exploring them.

- Use **OCCinfo profiles** and **occupational videos (alis.alberta.ca/videos)** on the ALIS website to explore your chosen occupations in-depth. You may have already looked at or read the profile for these occupations, but have another look at them.
- Gather important details about these occupations and record the information in the **My Top Three Occupations Chart** on page 21.

Seeing all your career information together in one chart will help you find patterns and make comparisons. It might also help you make decisions about things you may need or want in your work life.

Occupational Profile

Search for more information about your chosen occupations.

1. GO TO at **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**.
2. CLICK on **Search by Title.**
3. ENTER the occupation name in the Keyword Search box and CLICK **Go.** If the occupation doesn't come up, search alphabetically for the possible name.
4. Use the information in the profile to fill in the **My Top Three Occupations Chart**.
5. Repeat for your two other occupations.

Occupation Descriptions

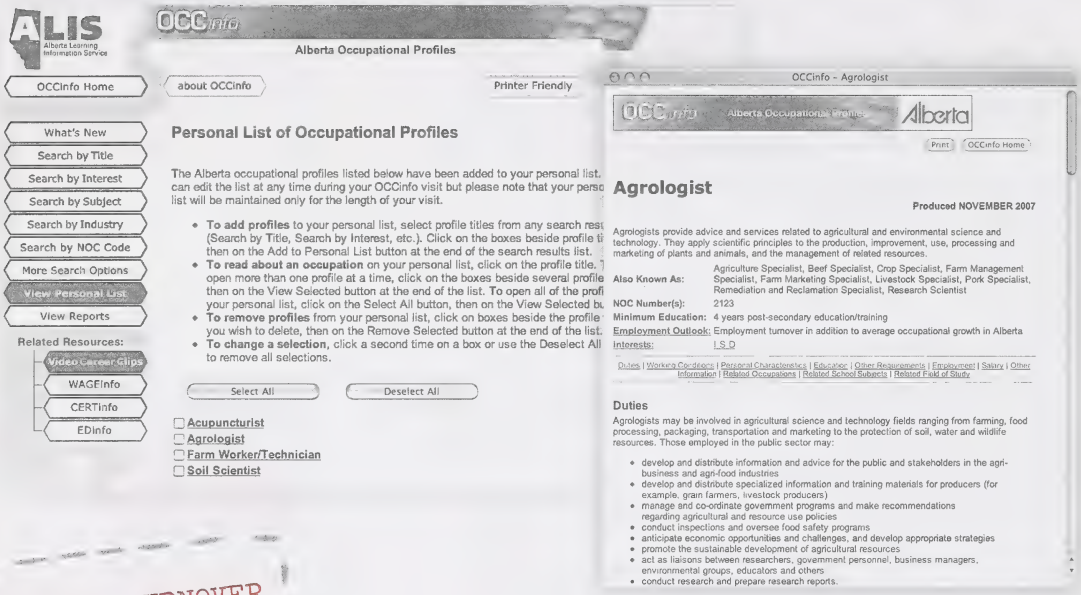
Can't find your occupation on OCCinfo? Check out **Career Cruising** or **Bridges** program (if available) occupation descriptions, or do a search on **Google.ca** or **Wikipedia.org** by occupation name.

NOTE!

If you can't find one of your chosen occupations on OCCinfo, for example, fine arts teacher, look up teacher and then the form of fine arts you are interested in – dance. Check in the employment advancement sections of these profiles. Chances are the combined occupation is mentioned there. When completing the chart, combine these two profiles for your information.

Employment Outlook

Have a look at the **Employment Outlook** in the occupation profile summary. Based on recent employment data, an employment outlook gives a summary or trend of current and **predicted** future job demand for people in a particular occupation.



EMPLOYMENT TURNOVER
= job vacancies created by people leaving existing positions. For example, people may quit because they have found other jobs, been promoted or decided to retire.

OCCUPATIONAL GROWTH
= the creation of new positions that never existed before through new businesses starting, businesses expanding their operations, or an increased demand for this occupation caused by technological or economic changes in the workplace.

The statement, "employment turnover, in addition to above average occupational growth in Alberta", means that if there was 2.5 per cent new jobs created this year, you can expect the same 2.5 per cent growth in new jobs will be created in this occupation next year.

Occupational Videos

There are more than 150 six-minute videos about real people giving an inside look into their occupation on the ALIS website. Try exploring some of them.

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/video**.
2. ENTER one of your top three occupations in the **Keyword** or **Phrase box** and CLICK **Search.**
3. If a video is available for your chosen occupation, watch it and add any new information you discover to your chart.
4. Check if videos are available for the two other occupations you chose, and watch those as well.

   NOTE: The Learning Clicks CD-ROM links directly to each of these videos and organizes them by career pathway.

My Top Three Occupations Chart

	#1	#2	#3
Occupations:			
Duties:			
Working Conditions:			
Personal Characteristics: *(skills, values, interests, personality traits)*			
My Top Five Needs & Wants:			
Educational Requirements:			
Employment & Advancement:			
Employment Outlook:			
Salary/Wage:			
Related Occupations:			

DID YOU KNOW?

The occupations you've chosen to explore as your top three today are not necessarily the ones you will follow through on after high school. You may have a strong sense of where you're headed–or you may not. Still, these are a good start.

Your skills, interests and personality will continue to change over the next few months and years. You'll likely keep repeating the career and education planning steps as you and your plans change.

Through this process, you've learned how to research your choices and what resources are out there to help you keep exploring possibilities.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Is being self-employed right for you?

Any occupation lends itself to becoming an entrepreneur. Do you have a flair for creativity, love challenges and enjoy taking on a leadership role? These characteristics, together with a good business idea and some business training could be the right ingredients to start your own company.

Learn more about entrepreneurship, check out these sites: alis.alberta.ca/self-employment and alis.alberta.ca/rocketfuel

You miss 100 per cent of the shots you never take.

WAYNE GRETZKY

Explore More...

The 3 Ps of Exploring Occupational Possibilities.

The three Ps are publish, people and practice.

1. **Publish** Do research by finding information online or in hard copy (published resources) and record the results. You've done much of this already in the previous exercises.
2. **People** Follow up by talking to people who are taking or have taken the education or training program, or who work in the occupations you're interested in.
3. **Practice** Try things out by volunteering and working, or enrolling in part-time education or work before you make an occupation choice.

Here are some additional tips on exploring other possibilities about occupations you may find interesting.

Publish

If you're interested in working in a specific field (industry)—for example, the entertainment industry or the health care sector—visit **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**:

1. CLICK on **Search by Industry.**
2. ENTER a keyword in the Keyword Search box or **click on an industry "cluster"** from the list.
3. SCROLL through the results to find occupations that look interesting.
4. Need help narrowing down your occupation options? GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/tips** and search by alphabetical listing or keyword (title) for the tip sheet, *Choosing Options: What Next?*

People

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/tips** and search by alphabetical listing or keyword (title) for the tip sheet, *Information Interviewing for Career Options.*

Practice

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/tips** and search by alphabetical listing or keyword (title) for the tip sheet, *Volunteer to a Better Career Path.*

Education is not the answer to the question. Education is the means to the answer to all questions.

WILLIAM ALLIN

Step Three
Choosing a Direction

You've got your three top potential occupations. The next step is to figure out the direction you would go **if** you were going to pursue one of your top three occupations. For most occupations, you would head towards a post-secondary education.

Post-Secondary Education

Post-secondary education is the learning and training that comes after a secondary (high school) education. There's a lot of emphasis on post-secondary education—this section will help you find out why.

DID YOU KNOW?

It's estimated that in the 21st century, 65 per cent of new jobs in Alberta will require some form of post-secondary education.[2]

The approximate average full-time yearly salary for a worker in Alberta with[3]

- less than high school is $35,442
- a high school education is $39,000
- a post-secondary education is $42,000 - $62,000

Not getting a post-secondary education will cost you more than getting one, even taking into account the cost of the education and the income you don't earn while in school.[4]

Apprenticeship combines on-the-job training, work experience and technical training. From Day 1, apprentices earn an hourly wage for their time on the job.

Do The Math:

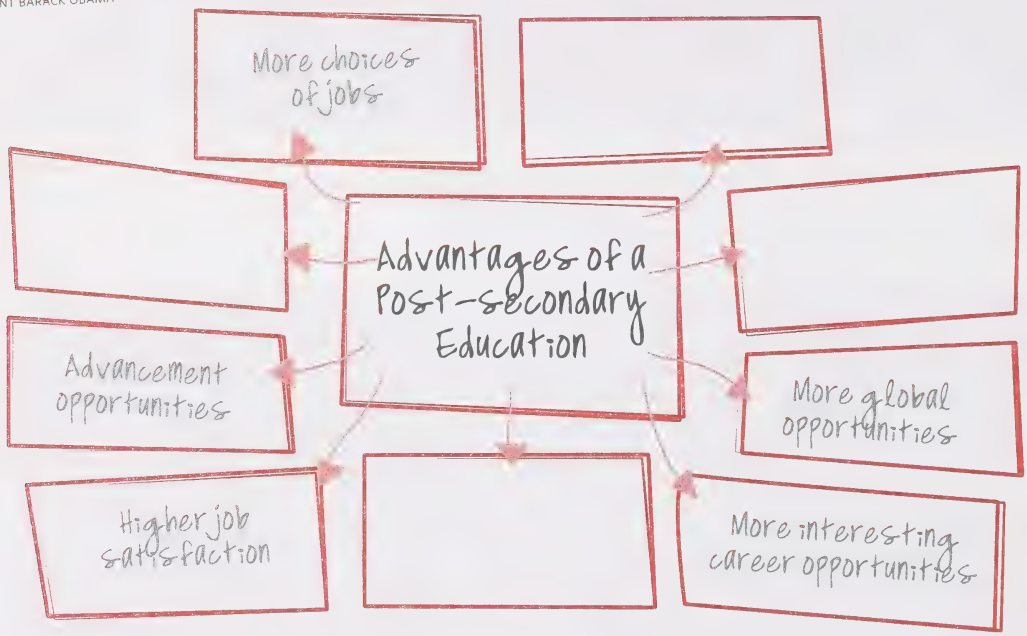
Secondary (high school)
+ Post-Secondary (college, university, apprenticeship training, etc.)
Open Doors!

Why Get a Post-Secondary Education?

"With the changing economy, no one has lifetime employment. But [post-secondary education] provides lifetime employability."

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

- Brainstorm some reasons why it can be a good idea to get a post-secondary education.
- Fill in the **Advantages of a Post-Secondary Education Web**.
- Check out your Top Five Factors (your needs and wants) on page 15 or have a look on the inside cover of your **Learning Clicks CD-ROM** for ideas!



DID YOU KNOW?

The longer you stay in school, the more OPTIONS you will have in life.

EVERYONE can go to post-secondary and there are many ways to help pay for it.

There are many people and resources to help YOU go to post-secondary. Ask your teachers, parents or counsellors for help.

What Types of Post-Secondary Schools are out There?

There are many options for post-secondary education available in Alberta. To learn about the different types of post-secondary schools, visit some of these resources:

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/school-differences** for the tip sheet, *College, Technical Institute, University—What's the Difference?*
2. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/publications** and SEARCH the key phrase, **Time to Choose.** DOWNLOAD the PDF and find the section, **What Post-Secondary Programs are Offered and Where?**
3. Check out the Learning Clicks CD-ROM to help you understand the many differences between types of schools. On the CD, you can also find a map for each school campus in Alberta!

What Types of Programs can I take?

There are various types of programs offered at post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/program-differences** for the tip sheet, *Certificate, Diploma, Applied Degree, Degree . . . What's the Difference?*

In some fields, different levels of education lead to similar occupations. Work through this example:

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**.
2. SEARCH by Title and enter **Landscape.**
3. CLICK on the links for Landscape Architect, Landscape Architectural Technologist and Landscape Gardener. Look at the profiles for each of them. What are the education requirements for each occupation?

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:

.....

.....

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL TECHNOLOGIST:

.....

.....

LANDSCAPE GARDENER:

.....

List three similarities that are shared by these three occupations:

.....

.....

.....

NOTE!

The important thing is the differences in these occupations. Which activities do you think you would want to do on a day-to-day basis?

TIP:

Check out what it's like to be a post-secondary student. Watch the student video interviews at **alis.alberta.ca/studentlife** or view them on the **Learning Clicks** CD-ROM.

ORDER: "TIME TO CHOOSE"

This publication gives you:

- details on the types of programs and institutions
- Programs Chart showing which programs are offered and where in Alberta
- Features Chart listing each institution's services

alis.alberta.ca/publications

Just enter the title "Time to Choose" in the keyword or phrase box.

DO YOU HAVE A LEARNING OR PERMANENT DISABILITY?

Find your **Planning for Post-secondary Transition Guide** and other great resources and tools at **alis.alberta.ca/disabilities.**

Make your post-secondary transition a success!

EDinfo – Education Information

EDinfo is a database of Alberta's post-secondary schools and programs and distance learning programs available in Western Canada.

Choose either A or B for this activity:

A Find **one education program for each occupation** on your top three list.

B Find **three education programs related to one occupation** on your top three list.

This information will help you complete the **My Three Programs** activity on page 27.

this activity takes a while

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/edinfo**.
2. CLICK on **Search by Program** in the left navigation menu.
3. ENTER an occupation name in the **Keyword** box. CLICK **Go.**
4. BROWSE the search results by clicking on the links.
5. CHOOSE a program considering your preferences of

   Program type Do you want a certificate, diploma or degree?

   School type Do you want to attend a college, university or technical school?

   School location Will you live at home, go away to school or take a distance-learning program?

   Admission requirements Do you have (or can you get) the grades and prerequisite courses required?

- If you need more information than the EDinfo page provides, CLICK on the link to the school. Use the search function on the school's homepage to find information.
- Use the information you find to complete the **My Three Programs** activity.

If there's a specific school you're interested in, go back to **alis.alberta.ca/edinfo**. Use the **Search by School** feature to find that school. Then you can search the program list available for that school.

My Three Programs

	#1	#2	#3
Program:			
Institution:			
Length of Program:			
Admission Requirements:			
Courses:			
Grades:			
Degree, Diploma or Certificate Earned:			
Cost per Year:			
Tuition & Fees:			
Books & Supplies:			

"I always say don't make plans, make options."

JENNIFER ANISTON

What if I Don't Feel Ready?

What if I am not ready to go to post-secondary school right after high school? You can keep your options open by

- volunteering—do something that interests you
- working and learning on the job in a paid position; perhaps an apprenticeship
- trying out a post-secondary program—take some part-time courses
- traveling to volunteer, work or seek new experiences

DID YOU KNOW?

You may or may not end up in one of the post-secondary programs you've explored in this step. You could change your mind and your direction several times before you finish high school. Now you know how to find the information that will help you choose a direction.

Explore More...

- Apprenticeship is a post-secondary choice that high school students sometimes over-look. Learn more about apprenticeship and careers in the trades at **alis.alberta.ca/apprenticeship**.
- Did you know you can take some post-secondary courses and programs online? **eCampusAlberta.ca** and **Athabasca University (athabascau.ca)** both offer distance learning. Find more information about distance programs and options available at EDinfo at **alis.alberta.ca/edinfo**.
- Plan to visit the post-secondary schools you're interested in by searching Open House or Campus Visits on the school's website.

Step Four

Making It Happen

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."
ANONYMOUS

To make things happen in your career planning process, you need to

- identify what you want (your goal)
- make plans to achieve your goal
- put your plans into action

Identify Your Goal

In the first three steps you've discovered what you want. Next you'll figure out how to make it happen. Choose the occupation you are most interested in and a related post-secondary program. Record your findings in the **Making it Happen Web** on page 33.

Here's an example of a goal related to enrolling in a post-secondary program:

"By September of 2012 I will be accepted into, and will have funding in place for, the computer systems technology program at ABC Institute."

Is this a SMART goal? Why or why not?

.....

.....

Create your own SMART goal related to the post-secondary program you're interested in and record it on the Making It Happen Web page 33.

Making Plans to Achieve Your Goal

Plans help you identify the steps you need to complete to achieve your goal.

A plan for your education includes

- completing the admission requirement courses to get into your chosen program
- getting the grades you need to be accepted
- enrolling in the program of your choice
- paying for tuition, books and living costs
- other:

  .....

  .....

  .....

DID YOU KNOW?

The best goals are smart:

S = Specific
M = Measurable
A = Achievable
R = Realistic
T = Time-limited

Sharing your goals with others and writing them down helps you commit more to achieving them.

Admission Requirement Courses are the high school courses you need to be accepted into a post-secondary program.

Speak with your guidance counsellor to make sure you have the right Grade 12 courses to get into the post-secondary programs you are thinking about.

Completing admission requirement courses

- Record the courses required for entrance to your program of choice on your **Making it Happen Web** on page 33. Also refer to Step 3, Choosing a Direction.
- Are you taking the 10- 20- or 30-level courses you'll need? If not, talk to your parents and school counsellor about enrolling in those courses.

Getting the grades

- Record the grades you'll need to be accepted into your program on the **Making it Happen Web**.
- For help maintaining or raising your grades, speak with your parents, friends, teachers and school counsellors. For study tips, go to **alis.alberta.ca/tips** and search by alphabetical listing or keyword (title) for the tip sheet, *How to Study Effectively.*
- For help preparing for Grade 12 diploma exams, visit **education.alberta.ca/students/exams.aspx**.

Enrolling in the program

- If you're planning to attend a college or university, check out **Planning for Post-Secondary: Grade 12 Checklist** at **alis.alberta.ca/checklist12**.
- If you're considering doing an apprenticeship, check out the following links: **alis.alberta.ca/apprenticeshiptips** for more information and **alis.alberta.ca/apprenticeship**.
- Checkout **alis.alberta.ca/onlineservices** for all the direct links and information to register in many post-secondary schools and programs.

NOTE!

Many post-secondary programs require a high school diploma for entrance. Talk to your guidance counsellor and make sure you're on track to meeting your course and credit requirements.

Paying for post-secondary

Paying for post-secondary education may seem like a major challenge. Your costs will include tuition, fees, books and supplies. It may also include living expenses, such as transportation, food, personal expenses and rent. You will most likely use several sources to help pay for your education including your savings, help from family, earnings from part-time and summer jobs, scholarships, and maybe government student loans. The activities in this section will help you find ways to pay for school.

DID YOU KNOW?

The average cost per year for attending post-secondary is between $8,000 and $14,000, depending on the school and program you attend and whether you live at home with your parents or independently.

Record the cost of tuition and books you found in Step 3 for your chosen program on your Making it Happen Web.

Go to **alis.alberta.ca/tips** and search by alphabetical listing or keyword (title) for the tip sheet, Financing Your Education.

Pick the four most likely ways you could pay for your program:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Go to **alis.alberta.ca/tips** and search by alphabetical listing or keyword (title) for the tip sheet, Show Me The $$$ - Scholarships, Bursaries and Grants.

"You see things and you say, "Why?" But I dream things that never were and I say, "Why not?"
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Finding Free Money for Your Education

There are scholarships, grants and awards available to assist students with paying for their education. You just have to take the time to look for potential free money.

1. VISIT **alis.alberta.ca/scholarships**.
2. EXPLORE the links. Check out the Scholarship Connections database that lists over 450 scholarships and awards.
3. PICK two or three awards (scholarships, bursaries or grants) you think you could apply for and check out the details.
4. RECORD them here.

.....

.....

5. To find more Canadian scholarships, go to **studentawards.com**.

DID YOU KNOW?

To apply for high school transcripts, post secondary programs, and various funding, you need to know your Alberta Student Number (ASN).

Every student in Alberta is assigned a unique ASN.

Find yours at **education.alberta.ca/asn**

Applying for Government Student Funding

1. GO TO **alis.alberta.ca/studentsfinance**.
2. CLICK **About Loans and Grants.** Answer the following questions:
   - What is a student loan?
   - When do you have to pay back a student loan?
   - How do you apply for student funding? (See **alis.alberta.ca/apply**.)
   - Visit **edulinx.ca** and check out the Entrance Counselling session. This session gives you complete information about the student funding loan life cycle and process.
3. RECORD your plan for paying for post-secondary on your **Making it Happen Web**.
   - Use the budget sheet on the back cover to estimate your living costs and record them on your web.

Put Your Plans Into Action

There's a long list of things to do and details to keep track of on the path between high school and your post-secondary goals. Find out what steps you should be taking to plan for post-secondary as you move through high school:

- Grade 10: **alis.alberta.ca/checklist10**
- Grade 11: **alis.alberta.ca/checklist11**
- Grade 12: **alis.alberta.ca/checklist12**

NOTE!

Don't worry if you're in grade 12 or past and didn't start planning-you can start now!

As you start to make decisions and move forward, keep these things in mind:

- Feeling uncertain or overwhelmed is normal.
- You'll reach your goal by taking **many small steps, not one big one.**
- It's okay to change your direction along the way as you learn more about yourself (see transfer information).
- Learning is a lifelong journey—it's never too late to start taking steps.
- By using this guide you've developed awareness, skills and resources to help you reach your goals.

Congratulations! You're already moving towards your goals.

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."
LAO TSU

ALBERTA TRANSFER GUIDE

If you complete part of a program and decide not to finish it, you might be able to transfer some of your completed credits towards a different program or to a different school.

Some schools have agreements where you can start your program at one school and finish at another. For example, a lot of times you can do the first two years of a bachelors degree at one school (institution) and then transfer to another institution for the last two years.

Visit **TransferAlberta.ca** to find out more about transfer credit.

Coming Fall 2009: APPLY ALBERTA

- Applying for post-secondary studies in Alberta?
- Interested in applying to more than one institution?
- Want a simpler application and transcript process?

Apply Alberta can help!

You can apply to multiple institutions and only enter your personal and academic history once.

You don't have to pay for transcripts requested through applyalberta.ca.

Check out **applyalberta.ca** to find out more about the new online application system

Explore More...

- Visit **alis.alberta.ca/publications** and search by keyword (title) or phrase for the publication **Money 101** to learn about budgeting and planning for post-secondary costs.
- Go to **alis.alberta.ca/moneyguides** and explore these Guides and Publications for more information about paying for your post-secondary education.

Final Thoughts

This is the first of many new beginnings you'll experience on your career and education journey. Use the steps and resources you've learned about in this guide to help you keep moving forward and growing as you find your career and life path.

GOOD LUCK!

and remember to have fun on your journey!

Making it Happen Web

Admission Requirement Courses:

My Plan for Completing the Admission Requirements Courses:

School Name & Location (or Online):

Length of Time to Complete Program:

Degree, Diploma or Certificate?

Cost of Tuition, Books & School Fees (per year):

Living Costs (per year)

Rent/Residence:

Living Expenses:

Transportation:

Other:

TOTAL:

My Post-Secondary Education Goal:

My Smart Goal:

Admission Requirement Grades:

My Plan for Getting the Grades I Need:

Possible Occupations:

Plan for Paying for My Post-secondary Education

Sources & Estimated Amounts:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Action Steps to Getting the Funds:

1.
2.

Imagining My Future:

NOTES:

End Notes:

1. Jim Bright, Robert Pryor, and Lucy Harpham, "The role of chance events in career decision making", Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 66,no.3 (2004): 561-576.
2. Alberta Employment and Immigration, (2006). *Alberta Modified COPS Outlook, 2005-2010. Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce: Alberta's 10 Year Strategy.*
3. Statistics Canada, (2005). Census is conducted on a five-year cycle.
4. Bailey-Romanko, Karen. (2003). *Finding Your Path: A guide to career and education planning.* First Nations Education Steering Committee. Retrieved on March 2, 2009 from www.fnesc.ca (see Publications).

Budget Worksheet for Students

1. Total Income

Source	Amount
Scholarships, grants or bursaries	_____
Family support	_____
Student loans	_____
Savings / Summer job	_____
Part-time job (Multiply monthly amount by number of months in school)	_____
Tax refund	_____
Other: _____	_____
Total income:	_____

2. Up-Front, One-Time Expenses

Expense	Amount
Tuition and fees	_____
Books and supplies	_____
Damage deposit	_____
Utilities hook-up	_____
Moving expenses	_____
Household items, etc.	_____
Car insurance / registration	_____
Other: _____	_____
Total up-front, one-time expenses:	_____

3. Determine Your Monthly Income

Total income (from #1)	_____
Less: up-front, one-time expenses (from #2)	– _____
Balance to live on	= _____
Divide by # of months in school year	÷ _____
Total monthly income	= _____

4. Estimate Monthly Expenses

Expense	Amount
Rent	_____
Utilities	_____
Food and groceries	_____
Child care	_____
Clothing and personal care	_____
Telephone	_____
Transportation / car maintenance	_____
Medical / dental costs (not covered by insurance)	_____
Recreation and entertainment	_____
Emergency fund	_____
Other: _____	_____
Total monthly expenses:	_____

5. Record, Review, Revise

Monthly Income	_____
Total Expenses	- _____
Savings or shortfall:	= _____

Alberta

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA
Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
3 3286 54142015 0

exploring possibilities

Choosing a Direction

Finding out What I want

If you've ever wondered...

- What am I going to do after high school?
- How do I decide what I want to do?
- What kind of training or education should I take after high school?
- What if I start a program and then change my mind partway through?
- How do I figure out what to do next?

...then use this guide to get started!

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology
Campus Alberta Awareness